



Update

Dear Friends,

December 12, 2018

Since my election to the KPERS Board of Trustees I have a new disclaimer that I must include in these updates from now on: "The views expressed in this update represent my views and/or the views of the Coalition. They do not in any way represent the views of KPERS Board of Trustees nor do I speak for them." (Ernie Claudel)

REGARDING THE FEBRUARY RALLY

Since numerous organizations that annually attend the KCPR Rally in Support of KPERS do not meet in December because of holiday activities, we wanted to give you some information early so you can make plans to attend in advance. The rally is scheduled for 10:00 – 11:30 AM, Monday, February 4, 2019. It will take place in the 1st Floor Rotunda in the Capitol in Topeka. (More Specific directions will be forth coming in January.)

We cannot control who accepts our invitations to speak at the Rally, but here is the list of who we annually invite. (I don't think it would be stretching the truth to say that those who accept the invitation to speak are very strong supporters of KPERS, and those that didn't probably weren't.) We invite the Governor, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House, the minority leaders of the House and Senate, the Chairpersons of the Senate and House Committees which are assigned pension issues, plus the ranking minority member of these committees. We will also invite Stephen Johnson, who will likely be the Chair of the Joint Committee on Pensions, Benefits, and Investments,

We have indicated earlier that this is the most promising year for a COLA in many years, and we need you to attend if at all possible because we need boots on the floor and bottoms in the seats. We ask each of you to visit your State Senator and Representative and deliver a card (which we provide) asking for a COLA. We also ask you to drop a card off at the Governor's office. We had lower attendance than usual last year, [because of weather and the flu] but all in attendance apparently delivered their cards and numerous attendees had made previous appointments to visit their legislator. This will be especially important if you have a new representative. We received feedback from KPERS that this action apparently spurred some quarries regarding a COLA from legislators. We can only imagine the response if we filled the place!! Please begin making your arrangements now!! We will make every attempt to have a bill number for you to champion!

TODAY'S MEETING

The December 12, 2018, KCPR meeting was held at the KNEA location. The next meeting will be January 9, 2019 (the second Wednesday as usual).

During this morning's meeting the following discussions/announcements took place:

- A. The fall fundraiser request letters have been mailed and KCPR has received some promising donations. Thanks to all who donated! We look forward to working with our other partners in calendar year 2019.
- B. The KCPR 2019 Report to the Legislature was approved. We would like to get the copy to all legislators as soon as possible. While assembling the report, the "History of KPERS Benefit Increases" was retyped and carefully reviewed. The final count indicates that there were 16 benefit increases between 1973 and 1998. There were also 5 bonuses during this time. (A bonus in this case is defined as a onetime increased benefit enhancement, NOT permanently added to the base.) The 16 count also includes benefit increases to the base benefit as well as 13th check authorizations.
- C. A KCPR Committee is working on a proposed COLA Bill. The concept was approved and will be discussed with legislative allies. If they believe that it is a possibility, the committee will have the bill written. When completed, those present voted to have it introduced in both houses.
- D. The KCPR Co-Chairs will schedule a meeting with the Governors Transition Team to discuss a COLA as well.

PRESENT KPERS FUNDING LEVELS

Members of the KCPR Steering Committee attended the Joint Committee on Pensions, Benefits and Investments on October 29, 2018. At that committee meeting emphasis was placed on continued proper funding by the Chair and Vice Chair, as well as several of the committee members. They cautioned against fund backsliding. The annual actuarial recommended contribution, because of the years of underfunding, is roughly 6 times larger than if the pension system had been properly funded. The present contribution plan is scheduled to reach the actuarial (\$692 Million) amount in 2021. If this schedule is maintained, this will be the first time in 27 years that the 'proper' actuarial amount has been scheduled for payment. Further, the recent emphasis on proper funding has reduced the target of 80% funding of KPERS to 2026. This is 6 years earlier than the projections in 2008.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

I try very hard to keep up with your address changes. If you have asked me to change your email, from work to home, or just changed providers, and I have not responded, please give me another chance. There is at least one former City of Hutchinson employee that I have lost the new address for that I know of. If there are others, please let me know.

January KCPR Meeting

Some of the topics to be discussed are as follows:

- A. Delivery of the "Recommendations for the 2019 Legislative Session" will be scheduled...
- B. Further development of the Rationale for a COLA Bill.
- C. Development of the weekly "Email Blasts" to the legislature will be evaluated.
- D. Final Report on Our Fundraising Efforts.
- E. Final preparations for the February Rally.

Date to Remember

The **KCPR Rally** in support of KPERS will be held Monday, **February 4, 2019**, at 9:30 AM at the State Capitol in Topeka. (This date is Tentative but likely.)

Have a wonderful Weekend! Let me know if you have questions!!

- Remember to send me your updated email address...also if for any reason you should no longer wish to receive this update, let me know at the address listed at the end of this "update," and I will contact you and remove you from the official mailing lists.
- Just a reminder, that this email is an official report of the Kansas Coalition of Public Retirees. If I editorialize, I will indicate that fact.
- Remember that we want you to forward this to other retirees and the "working" who will benefit from this information.
- The KCPR website is www.ksretirees.org

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